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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/773,887	02/06/2004	Upen Bharwada	03-10	7465

27901 7590 04/18/2006

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EXAMINER

MENON, KRISHNAN S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1723

DATE MAILED: 04/18/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/773,887

Applicant(s)

BHARWADA, UPEN

Examiner

Krishnan S. Menon

Art Unit

1723

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 February 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

Claim 1-7 are pending as originally filed.

Claim Objections

Claims 5-7 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim cannot not depend from another multiple dependent claim. See MPEP § 608.01(n). For examination, the claims are assumed to depend from claim 1 only.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

The limitation, '... spacers ... thinner than the spacers appropriate for use in a reverse osmosis unit which is fed directly with water to be treated', is not clearly defined in the specification for one of ordinary skill in the art to determine the metes and bounds of the claim. Applicant has not defined what is appropriate and what is not appropriate for the thickness of the spacer for a reverse osmosis unit that is fed directly, without the use of

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a microporous pre-filter. For want of such a clear definition, for examination purpose, it is assumed that the feed spacer thickness is about between 15 and 30 mils (380 microns – 750 microns), 15 being the lowest applicant claimed in claim 2 and 30 being the Filmtec SWHR 380 membrane discussed in the example as the "standard".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Al-Samadi (US 5,501,798), with evidence from Johnson et al (US 6,881,336).

Al-Samadi in figure 3 teaches an apparatus comprising a MF membrane and an RO membrane in series, permeate from the MF membrane being the feed for the RO membrane as claimed. Al-Samadi teaches Zenon Environmental MF membrane (suction –driven immersed membrane) and Filmtec FT-30 RO membranes in the working example.

Al Samadi uses commercial membranes and does not teach what specific feed spacers to be used in the membrane. However, the use of the feed spacer in the range claimed is inherent or implied in the reference, and is in a commonly used range in the RO systems, as evidenced by Johnson et al (US 6,881,336), column 6 line 33 – column

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7 line 35, wherein spacer thickness from 350 micron – 700 micron are discussed, and in column 7 lines 14-19, Johnson teaches that 500 micron to 2 mm are commonly used.

Al Samadi teaches spiral wound membranes for RO. Desalinating water and use of salt water are intended use. Al Samadi also uses the apparatus for such applications.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Krishnan S. Menon whose telephone number is 571-272-1143. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wanda L. Walker can be reached on 571-272-1151. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Krishnan S. Menon
Patent Examiner
4/17/06